

THURSDAY CAREERS CHATS

Date of Session: 3-22-12 Title of Session: Publishing Careers

Alumni Presenter: Dervla Kelly Class Year: _____

Title: Editor Employer: Stewart, Tabori & Chang

Notes from Session:

Background

- Graduated in 2002 with an English and anthropology double major
- Worked in a doggy daycare for a year after graduating and then started working for minimum wage as an intern with Stewart, Tabori & Chang (found her internship through mediabistro.com)
- That internship then led to an Editorial Assistant position with the company
- She credits the post-graduate internship as the best introduction she could have gotten to publishing work. She knows a lot of people who pursue a master's, but for her the internship was the best option to get her feet wet
- Now works as an Editor

Her Work

- She has very flexible work hours between 9 and 5. After-hours work about once a week (book launch parties, signings, etc.)
- Works on 8-10 books per year, usually on topics such as interior design, gardening and cooking... everything from high-end hard cover to less expensive paperbacks.
- Because she works with a smaller house, she gets to do a little bit of everything
- Typical day includes about 1-2 meetings (sometimes presenting a book proposal in an editorial meeting), usually has a lunch meeting (with agents or potential authors...trying to "woo"), she reads lots of book proposals, also comes up with idea proposals on her own (reads a lot of blogs and seeks out people who might have something interesting to write a book about), sets up photo shoots and hires photographers, participates in auctions (competing for books by submitting offers to agents), writes book flaps, etc.

Marketability

- Strong English background is important (being well-spoken and well-written)
- Bringing something different to the table can help (her anthropology major helped her)
- Internships!

Miscellaneous

- She recommends choosing a position that enables you to work on books you might have an interest in. The subject areas of her books are in line with her interests, which makes for very enjoyable work.
- It's not a high-paying job, but you pursue it for your love of books and reading
- Editorial Publishing titles (work your way up): Intern, Editorial Assistant, Assistant to Publisher, Assistant Editor, Associate Editor, Editor, Senior Editor
- Other facets of publishing, too: Publicity, etc.
- Most publishing jobs can be found at publishersmarketplace.com/jobs/